

REMARKS

The present application has been amended in response to the Examiner's Office Action to place the application in condition for allowance. Applicant, by the amendments presented above, has made a concerted effort to present claims which clearly define over the prior art of record, and thus to place this case in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, the objected to the specification for not including section headings. Applicant has amended the specification to include section headings and it is therefore requested that the Examiner's objection be withdrawn.

In addition, the Examiner rejected the claims citing United States Patent Nos. 6,403,935 (Kochman et al.) And 6,814,889 (O'Grady et al.) and Applicant's admitted prior art. Applicant respectfully traverses.

The Examiner asserts that Kochman et al. discloses a supplementary rail in braided form, and illustrates it in its Figures 7A and 7B. Applicant submits that what in fact is shown and described in relation to Figures 7A and 7B is the provision of an electrode or bus bar that is stitched by stitches 18 of electrically conductive thread to provide a reliable mechanical and electrical connection between the bus bars 10 and electrically conducting heating threads 9 in the fabric 26. This neither discloses nor foreshadows the present invention.

Commencing with Applicants own earlier dated United States Patent No. 6,814,889, there was the realization that the conductive rail 10 provided on the sheet of heatable material could, in use, be damaged to such an extent that electrical power could not be provided over its full length. As a result, there could be sections of the sheet that remain unheated.

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As is advised in the introductory part of the present application, it is known for the heatable sheet of the earlier patent to be held in place by clamps, and the possibility arises that the conductive rail could be damaged by the clamps to such an extent that supply of electrical power is disrupted.

In the circumstance where the sheet of heatable material is highly flexible, then so must be the conductive rail. To solve the problem of the possibility of damage to the conductive rail disrupting the supply of electrical power over its full length, the invention proposes that a second rail is provided to overlay the conductive rail, and that the second rail is to have a flexibility matching that of the conductive rail. This is achieved by the use of a flexible metal braid as the second rail that has strength characteristics greater than those of the conductive rail with a flexibility and electrical conductivity at least equal to those of the conductive rail.

As stated above, Figures 7A and 7B of Kochman et al. do not disclose a conductive rail with an overlaid supplementary or second rail, and even less does it disclose the use of braid. “18”, as mentioned by the Examiner, is not braided wire or a supplementary rail. As stated in the specification at column 10, lines 55 to 65, “18” is stitching.

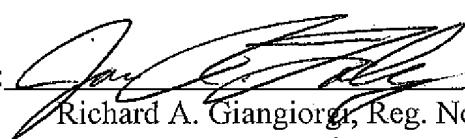
Although Applicant is of the opinion that the claims are patentable over the cited references, Applicant has amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitation of claim 2 in order to further distinguish the present invention from that which is disclosed in the prior art. The prior art does not disclose or teach the use of a supplementary rail in the form of braided conductive wire.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims of the application are allowable over the rejections of the Examiner. Should the present claims not be deemed adequate to effectively define the patentable subject matter, the Examiner is respectfully urged to call the undersigned attorney of record to discuss the claims in an effort to reach an agreement toward allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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